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A revision of frailties: Robertson Davies' "A Mixture of Frailties" and "The Lyre of Orpheus" (novels).

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A REVISION OF FRAILTIES:

ROBERTSON DAVIES' A MIXTURE OF FRAILTIES AND THE LYRE OF ORPHEUS

by

Christine Dorothy Zieba

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ABSTRACT

The remarkable similarities between Robertson Davies' A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus are immediately discernable, even though these novels are separated by thirty years. Both works centre upon the emotional and musical development of lead female characters who are analogous to one another in their backgrounds, naiveté, and learning experiences. Davies devotes a substantial portion of his narrative in both novels to examine social classes, religion, education, and the influence of money, thereby displaying any apparent changes his own possible views may have undergone during the passage of such a considerable length of time. While Davies places a greater emphasis upon mythological influences in The Lyre of Orpheus, this influence is developed from the relatively more minor part mythology played in A Mixture of Frailties. Davies' development of narrative technique between the publication of these two works must be analyzed to some extent to decipher whether or not the modifications he creates in his later work clearly illustrate his concerns towards continuous artistic progression.

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Upon examining Robertson Davies' A Mixture of Frailties (1958) and The Lyre of Orpheus (1988), one discerns that, although there are thirty years between the publication of the two, Davies has essentially used the same plot and character outline for both these novels. Relatively little has been written concerning the vividly apparent affinity between these two works. In W.J. Keith's review of the Cornish trilogy (1989), he draws parallels between all three of Davies' trilogies, while Judith Skelton Grant (1989) provides readers with a basic plot summary of both novels. Thomas E. Tausky (1989) focuses upon the musical similarities between both works. Only George Woodcock's article, "A Cycle Completed: The Nine Novels of Robertson Davies" (1990), provides readers with the most extensive, albeit brief, description of the parallels between these two novels. Woodcock not only illustrates the greatest number of parallels between these works, including both plot and character similarities, but also includes a limited examination of the themes that are interwoven throughout all Davies' novels. In both his articles and interviews, Davies has not formally indicated the comparisons found between A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus.

An analysis of both these novels compels one to acknowledge the most significant similarity: both leading characters are female students of music, one being a singer and one a composer, whose lives are basically carbon copies of each other. Davies does modernize Monica Gall's illicit love affair in A Mixture of Frailties, to produce Hulda Schnakenburg's

lesbian relationship in The Lyre of Orpheus, both of whom are coincidentally seduced by those specifically chosen to educate them. In noting that Davies continues his parallels by concocting similar troublesome situations in both works, one must examine how the dilemmas are handled, as well as the influence that male characters exert in both novels.

Davies also inspects a wide gamut of social levels in both works and sets up the same essential social distinctions. Both Monica and Hulda come from lower class surroundings and spring from parents with little involvement and interest in the gifts their daughters have been blessed with. Both sets of parents also bring with them distinctive religious beliefs, providing Davies with a base from which to delve into the religious differences between the classes. Neither of the parents express abject concern over their offspring's lives suddenly being dominated by rich benefactors. In this respect, Davies is exploring social parallels as part of his overall 'echoing' structure, in the fact that both sets of benefactors stem from upper class surroundings, yet Davies has them affected with what appear to be the most serious problems, one being the inability of the Bridgetowers to produce a male heir and the other being the birth of an illegitimate child. While Davies does examine the lives of the privileged and how their interference in the existence of women sorely lacking in worldly experience changes practically every character, one must determine what Davies' views towards class distinction really are. Davies' heroes may have come from nothing but life only begins

for his characters once they have virtually everything; there appears to be no middle class. Davies uses the pursuit of financial stability as a desire affecting virtually every character. In relation to his implied views concerning class distinction, one also notes a significant discrepancy between his portrayal of students and their instructors over the periods represented in these two fictions.

Davies uses mythology to update The Lyre of Orpheus with the inclusion of Orpheus and King Arthur, as well as E.T.A. Hoffman, whose unfinished opera Hulda must complete in pursuit of her Ph.D. In A Mixture of Frailties, Davies includes an examination of the myth that he believes is part of Canada, casting his characters into the roles of average Canadian 'types.' While Davies does also include figures that may be considered archetypal in A Mixture of Frailties, he overpowers his readers with the infusion of mythology into reality in The Lyre of Orpheus. Not only does The Lyre of Orpheus centre upon the staging of an opera concerning the life of King Arthur, but Davies also creates a parody of it using Arthur and Maria Cornish and Geraint Powell.

The manner in which Davies writes both novels also bears some inspection. The narrative point of view is problematic, especially in The Lyre of Orpheus, because he divides his narration between the anonymous narrator who tells the story and E.T.A. Hoffman describing his plight in limbo. Davies also often employs a tone closely resembling lecturing, so much so that it becomes difficult to separate the fiction from the

sermon. Some attention must be given to the possibility that a change occurred between novels in Davies' perspective concerning artistic matters and originality.

Perhaps the most obvious point with which to initiate a discussion of the striking similarities between these two novels, would be to analyze the socially naive and inept young females Davies creates as students of differing aspects of music: Monica Gall and Hulda Schnakenburg, hereafter simply referred to as Schnak. Although Davies may easily be labelled a music aficionado, he has limited first-hand knowledge concerning the life of a student of music. As if the task of effectively portraying a music student's development were not difficult enough, Davies has chosen to create female students. Not only must the author write convincingly of a process he himself has never personally undergone, but he must write as a female undergoing this process. To increase the complexity of this already difficult situation, the females Davies creates, while remarkably alike in some aspects, are markedly different in others. With all these obstacles to overcome, Elspeth Buitenhuis points out, "Perhaps the difficulty lies in Davies' failure to project fully into the female mind" (Buitenhuis 53). As will be demonstrated, Davies has difficulty projecting partially into the female mind and in creating effective, believable female characters of either the 1950s or 1980s.

In Monica, Davies has created a rather atypical young woman of the 1950s. Humphrey Cobbler first introduces Monica to

readers by saying, "She isn't pretty and she isn't plain; she's just a girl" (MF 39), but her physical appearance is the least of her problems. While Ivon Owen summarizes Monica's life by stating, "Her [Monica's] background is drab, with an ineffectual father, a crude and manic-depressive mother, a clerical job in the glue works, and evangelical religion" (Owen 59), Peter Baltensperger extends the analysis further by summarizing, "Her character embodies the basic prerequisites for growth but not the ability to liberate and utilize the dormant forces without constant external guidance" (Baltensperger 64). While the prospect of suddenly being handed the opportunity to travel to Europe to perfect a craft one has thus far only been remotely interested in, and being paid exorbitant amounts of money while doing so sounds outlandish enough, Davies enhances the plot by creating a young woman who is hardly believable. This will be demonstrated throughout this study. Davies' exposure to twenty-year-olds in the 1950s was obviously painfully limited if Monica Gall was created to depict someone even remotely similar to an 'ordinary' girl that the average reader could easily relate to.

In deliberately providing A Mixture of Frailties with more fantastic elements, Davies creates a female character who is a virtual tabula rasa. While Monica may be average in the respect that she is employed, in a job she presumedly secured through her father, and while waiting for some man to sweep her away into the blissful life of motherhood and housewifedom, this is where her similarities with most females conclude.

While being identified by no common sociological term in the 1950s, Moni a's family would now be labelled 'dysfunctional,' with parents who care little about her existence and a sister who behaves as anyone but a relative. She is involved with a backwards religious sect with no real understanding of what their doctrines are or if she adheres to them, and sings merely because she likes it, regardless of whether or not she has any talent. The only encouragement Monica receives is from her Aunt Ellen and even then Monica has no desire other than to sing and read the limited works her Aunt sets before her. She does not even cling to George Medwell as her only realistic salvation from the stagnant environment that she calls home. Before Monica sinks into the quagmire of non-existence, however, "A Mixture of Frailties depicts the redemption of Monica Gall from the cultural malnutrition of Ontario, or the musical hell of the Heart and Hope Gospel Quartet" (Morley 102). Before Monica possesses the worldly knowledge to realize and understand exactly how pathetic her situation really is, she is miraculously saved and given the opportunity for redemption. While this does appear to have the makings of a fairy tale, Keith points out that there is one significant catch: "A Mixture of Frailties is clearly a Cinderella-type story, though Monica Gall, the Cinderella in question, has to shed her conventional "goodness" in order to qualify as heroine..." (Keith, Roots 110). Shedding the 'conventional goodness' that Davies has endowed Monica with may make her into a more believable female character.

In a criticism of the novel, Michael Peterman writes, "...A Mixture of Frailties seems an aesthetic contradiction, a book torn between the appeals of surface and depth, between the spirit of attack and the spirit of understanding, between cutting wit and psychological probing" (Peterman 102). In effect, the problem with the novel is not only with Monica in relation to the other characters, but Monica in comparison to what Davies would like her to be. Davies has made the European individuals that she is purposefully exposed to of vastly superior intelligence in relation to both herself and those she has left behind in Canada. As Helen Hoy summarizes Monica's development:

> ...Monica begins knowing nothing and improves physically, socially, and emotionally, learns a pure new speech which she cannot undo and which bars her from her old world... and ultimately moves independently in the new world into which she has been thrust. (Hoy 79)

Davies does not convince the reader that the Monica who is his final creation is a better person than the one who only knew of life in Salterton and had no apparent dreams or aspirations. Baltensperger believes that "...Monica's self-realization... remains at an intellectual and emotional level without reaching the spiritual stages characteristic of total individuation" (Baltensperger 64). Therefore, Monica still does not rate on an equal level with the worldly and almost perfect Europeans Davies has created to guide her. The reader is also torn between accepting these 'ideal' characters at face value, or understanding that they are depicted through Monica's naive Canadian viewpoint.

The Monica who resides in Salterton is a self-sufficient female, no matter how pathetic her life and surroundings are. While she is complacent, she is also contented with what little she has. Once she is exposed to the world outside Salterton, she becomes almost completely reliant upon others for her survival. Baltensperger writes that the novel's main characters "...are all mentors of varying degrees who guide Monica through the tribulations of experience, provide her with wisdom and means of fulfillment, and are responsible for all her major progressions" (Baltensperger 64). While this statement provides the unknowing reader with the valid conception that Monica was largely well taken care of during her three years in England, it fails to acknowledge her decision on the stormy voyage across the Atlantic that "This was the country [England] which was to transform her. She was determined that in most things she would be transformed" (MF 89). In fact, she spent the entire first month in England eating little, getting progressively more ill, and assuming she had been abandoned by the Bridgetower Trust. She could not even find the courage to phone the lawyer into whose care she had been entrusted. Monica, a young woman who had basically held down two jobs in Canada, is suddenly unable to function because she is in a foreign country. Perhaps Davies includes this month-long observation of an utterly lost and desolate Monica, to show the readers exactly how 'simple' she really is.

In moving his analysis of the female music students from Monica to Schnak, Woodcock summarizes a comparison of the two

thus:

> While Monica Gall in the earlier novel is a singer whose talents are trained by inspired teachers, and the opera in which she becomes involved is the original work of another...in The Lyre of Orpheus we edge nearer to the creative role, for the musician, Hulda Schnakenburg...is a composer engaged not in an original composition but in a task of inspired reconstruction. (Woodcock 34)

Monica, a female in the 1950s, is training to be a singer, while the male figures around her are employed in the more difficult tasks of composing and conducting. Monica has the easy job. Schnak, a female in the 1980s, assumes what were the male roles in A Mixture of Frailties by composing and conducting, but even her composition is not her own. Schnak is merely continuing and completing the work of a man, left unfinished only because he died.

The most obvious similarities between these two women are summarized by Tausky, as he writes, "Like Monica, Schnak is the daughter of pious, anti-intellectual parents; like her, she needs to acquire general culture to complement and enhance her musical talent" (Tausky 6). He goes on to note that

> ...Monica and Schnak are enabled to achieve success by excellent instruction, both of a technical and spiritual nature, and such instruction is bought by large amounts of money, awarded by patrons under unusual circumstances. Musical aptitude alone would not have sufficed. (Tausky 6)

Not only are both females musically inclined, but Davies creates them so that initially, raw talent is virtually all they possess. Aside from Schnak's hardened attitude and rumpled exterior, Davies creates in her a younger (nineteen), more streetwise tabula rasa. Upon the occasion of their initial meeting, Simon Darcourt muses, "If it is possible to say so,

Schnak was distinguished only by her insignificance; if Darcourt had met her on the street he would probably not have noticed her" (LO 25). Basically, she is 'just a girl.' In order for Davies' educational process to succeed, he has created female students who are entirely open to suggestion and willing to be unquestioningly guided by their musical superiors.

Although Schnak is virtually as innocent as Monica, Davies modernizes this naive character by providing her with an aggressive and non-conformist exterior. While Monica is more than satisfied with her dysfunctional family and in maintaining a low employment position at the Consolidated Adhesives and Abrasives factory, Schnak has nothing to do with her parents, has possibly gone to University only as part of her supposed rebellion against them, and maintains a physical appearance that forces Darcourt to comment, "Schnak's dirt was not a sign of feminine protest, but the real thing. She looked filthy, ill, and slightly crazed" (LO 25). Apparently, this is Davies' modern version of a lower class female, much the same as Monica was thirty years earlier. Keith writes:

> In her attitudes, upbringing, and idiom, Schnak represents all that Davies dislikes, but he is sufficiently broad-minded to acknowledge the existence of genius in unprepossessing guises, and playfully manipulates the plot so that even a self-conscious member of the avant-garde...is impelled into working within the tradition of early nineteenth-century Romanticism. (Keith, Review 144)

While Monica has no formal schooling in music and was guided only by her Aunt Ellen's and the Heart and Hope Gospel Quartet's unconventional musical tastes, Davies also creates

Schnak so that the reader will be impressed with how her musical tastes change once she is professionally tutored. Tausky writes:

> The experimental music Schnak favors at the beginning of the book is an index of her social and emotional immaturity, as is her radically unkempt appearance...Both are outward signs of an inner and spiritual bewilderment. When Schnak takes to both Nilla and Hoffman's music, she finds a new social as well as musical signature. (Tausky 7)

Davies uses this change in musical tastes to display the fact that these young women cannot even stand confident in the types of music they like once they are informed of what types they should appreciate.

The contrast between small town standards and big city pretensions, or in the case of Monica, Salterton and England, is brought about between the first and third of Davies' trilogies, not from any move of Schnak's. While the Salterton trilogy centres almost exclusively in Salterton, the Cornish trilogy, with the exception of What's Bred in the Bone (1985), is based in Toronto. Small town influences are more prevalent in the second novel of the Cornish trilogy since Francis Cornish originates from Blairlogie, Ontario, otherwise known as the Jumping-off Place (BB 23), and moves throughout Europe, ending up in Toronto, much like Davies' own life. In an article concerning What's Bred in the Bone, D.O. Spettigue writes:

> The new series may become the Toronto trilogy, as Davies almost abandons the provincial scene for the sophistications of the big city. Nevertheless the small town remains as a background and an undeniable influence, part of the personal and national self that has to be put

> behind us, assimilated, controlled, escaped from, but never entirely rejected. (Spettigue 128)

Schnak's parents may be said to adhere to small town standards since, as her father admits to the Cornish Trust, "I wasn't as understanding as I should have been when she wanted to go to the university" (LO 63), and adds when questioned about what he thought of his daughter's gift with music, "But is that the kind of life you want your daughter...to get into? Do you hear much good of it? What kind of people? Undesirables, many of them, from what you hear" (LO 64). Mr. Schnakenburg's attitude is anything but modern and can certainly not be defined as an outlook normally associated with the city. Hence, with Schnak's move away from home and her eventual association with the Cornish Foundation, she can be seen as moving towards more contemporary surroundings.

This attitude is remarkably similar to that of the Galls. It is made clear to the Bridgetower Trust, upon their initial meeting with the Galls, that "They thought it might be nice if their daughter had a chance to study music abroad, but in the depths of their hearts it was a matter of indifference to them" (MF 45). While the Schnakenburgs object to Schnak's education, the Galls do not even care about Monica's. Therefore, she comes up against relatively little parental opposition to her move to England.

Once Monica has been corrupted with the ways of the European world, Davies has devised the plot so that the reader will believe she has been changed for the better, not only

artistically but personally as well. With her new-found knowledge, Peterman writes,

> ...Monica draws little strength from the old things--be they memories of family, places, or formative experiences. She is a mere vessel to be richly filled under Domdaniel's paternalistic guidance. It seems to matter very little--and this is a major blind spot in the novel--what shape the vessel originally takes. (Peterman 113)

Who Monica once was or the innocent values she represented matters little in Davies' depiction of a woman living in the 1950s. However, as Barbara Godard points out, there is some ambiguity in Monica's rise, hinting "...that she has been working all along to better herself socially, to join the establishment, rather than to undermine it and work for a new future" (Godard 262). If this is indeed the case, then the Bridgetower Trust has failed miserably in its mission. Instead of creating an environment, regardless of the cost, that would perpetuate the undiscovered true talent of a young Canadian woman, it has instead created a potential snob whose only pretension is to assimilate herself into a social class and artistic consciousness that is not naturally inherent in her. His creation of a female character who is so overcome by her surroundings that, other than the odd voice in her head sounding like her mother, Monica is almost totally eliminating the past from her memory, does nothing towards singing the praises of education in Europe. Instead Davies inadvertently intensifies the possible argument that Monica Gall is simply a provincial and incredibly impressionable girl who will not benefit from any amount of education, no matter from what country.

While each of the male characters will be discussed in greater detail further into the study, it is important here to note that once her instructors do become involved with Monica, they discover methods of manipulating her for their own satisfaction. In the case of Giles Revelstoke, he uses Monica as both an object for his verbal abuse and for his sexual desire, depending upon his widely varying moods. Murtagh Molloy also envisions Monica as a sexual object he has created due to his instructions concerning her development of "muhd." Sir Benedict Domdaniel, while the most subtle, uses her the most extensively. As Peterman explains, Domdaniel "...molds a singer and a woman who will, in the end, be an agreeable wife for himself, precisely attuned to his fine sense of professionalism" (Peterman 105). While instructing Monica as to the artistic European way of life, each of her instructors is also manipulating her to fit molds of their own individual design.

The possibility for controversy in Davies' choices of education for Schnak bears close resemblance to Monica's. Schnak's European influence comes, not from her transportation to Europe, but in bringing Europe to Schnak in the form of Dr. Gunilla Dahl-Soot. Grant writes, "As with Monica...the education of the young composer Hulda Schnakenburg lies in the hands of teachers--most notably her doctoral supervisor of Dr. Gunilla Dahl-Soot..." (Grant, Three 26). Gunilla is described as "...beautifully dressed, her figure was a marvel of slim elegance, and her face was undeniably handsome. What

made her strange was that she seemed to have stepped out of a past age" (LO 123). Gunilla, while presented in the most masculine manner, is important to Schnak's future development. She provides Schnak with a strong female role model and an indication of what she is capable of achieving on her own merits, not on the reputation of a husband. This is unlike Monica who is influenced by male music mentors. What took three instructors to accomplish in A Mixture of Frailties, namely the almost complete transformation of Monica from a naive country girl to worldly sophisticate, Davies believes will only take one teacher in The Lyre of Orpheus.

Both women, as part of their educational process, partake in sexual relationships with their instructors. All three of Monica's instructors see her, apart from being a woman with an acceptable voice, as a sexual object. Davies himself says:

> Sex is part of life, an enormously important part, but it is not, I think, what a lot of people seem to imagine it to be. It is not an isolated area, and it is only an aspect of love in the much larger sense, the relationship between people. (Davis 47)

Molloy attempts to have sex with Monica, Giles does, and Sir Benedict eventually will. Davies places more emphasis on sex than he believes.

Commenting upon the differences between the Salterton Monica and the internationally famous Monica, Grant writes, "Every aspect of Monica's initial grotesque context is faced, accepted, or laid to rest in the closing chapters" (Grant, Robertson 30). While Monica is faced with a great deal of emotional turmoil during the concluding chapters of the novel,

such as her mother's death, the death of her lover and the termination of monetary support from the Bridgetower Trust, Monica can hardly be considered less 'grotesque' than she was at the outset of the novel. She allowed her mother to die without proper medical care, whether out of respect for her mother's wishes or simply because she did not care and wanted to return to her beloved Giles, whom she eventually assisted in killing by leaving the scene of his attempted suicide with only the thoughts of preserving her newly-found reputation uppermost on her mind. Finally, she agrees to marrying a man at least thirty years her senior simply to increase her reputation. These are not the actions of a woman who is no longer 'grotesque' but of a woman who has become so because of her new-found knowledge. Davies himself says:

> It is made clear at the end of A Mixture of Frailties that Monica is going to have perhaps a very interesting and even a distinguished career, but she is going to have it essentially as the wife of a much more knowledgeable and artistically astute person. She perhaps is the one who will stand forward on the platform and reap in the applause, but essentially she is going to lean very heavily on her husband. That's the kind of girl she is; there is nothing in the world wrong with it.... (Davis 48)

According to Davies, Monica is a voice and a face and as long as the two hold out, she has nothing to worry about. Monica has simply turned herself into a self-serving woman who, in the process of learning to survive, has learned how to be a true Davies artist: let nothing stand between you and your possible reputation. Perhaps it is the difficulty contemporary readers would have with his own explanation of his heroine having self-actualized into a shadow that compelled

Davies to write a more modern version of this truly archaic character.

Although Schnak does change significantly from an ill-behaved girl to a socially acceptable woman because of her involvement with the Cornish Foundation, her progress is not documented in as great detail as is Monica's. This is largely because Schnak is not the single most important character in the novel, or the character around whom the entire advancement of the plot precariously hinges, as is Monica. While Schnak is used to initiate the story line, she is virtually left behind as the other story lines advance without her. She is, however, essentially the main character because without her there would be no story and her work on the opera, no matter how scarcely documented, is vital to the progression of each of the sub-plots within the novel itself. Although Davies' narrative process and development will be examined later, it is pertinent at this point to include Grant's views. She believes that Davies' problem with point of view and with the placing of information is solved in A Mixture of Frailties by "...limiting his focus for much of the story to the perspective of one developing character...There is, of course, still some digressive lore, but the bulk of it is firmly tied to the book's central character and theme" (Grant, Robertson 32). The changes Monica undergoes may simply be more dramatic because Davies has more time and space to delve into her past and her present. In The Lyre of Orpheus, however, Schnak becomes more of a secondary character as the sub-plots unfold. The

growth of a naive Canadian artist no longer appears as central to Davies' theme as it was in the 1950s.

More noteworthy to Schnak's educational process is the fact that she and her doctoral supervisor are lovers. Thus, Davies modernizes his original plot from A Mixture of Frailties. Monica's sexual involvement with Giles may have been rather controversial in 1958; in the 1980s it would be commonplace. Hence, he makes the lovers two women and the topic is relevant and up-to-date. Aside from any religious or moral qualms readers may have with the inclusion of this homosexual relationship, Tausky writes, "The influence of Dr. Gunilla Dahl-Soot upon Schnak is shown to be entirely positive, and it produces a social as well as musical transformation" (Tausky 7). Once again Davies uses sex to initiate the naive student to a higher plane of consciousness. Schnak may not have been as pursued as Monica by her new associates, but her sexual experience far exceeds Monica's simple flirtation with George Medwell, since with Schnak there were "...the three boys with whom she had undergone some sort of crude sexual experience..." (LO 185). The similarities between both Monica and Schnak's first sexual encounters with their respective instructors also bear a striking resemblance. In Monica's case she "...went to the bathroom to clean her teeth, a maiden; in slightly less than fifteen minutes she returned to her room, her teeth clean, and a maiden no more" (MF 178). The circumstances precipitating the beginning of Schnak and Gunilla's liaison was Gunilla's decision to bathe Schnak personally (LC 186).

Perhaps Davies is attempting to imply that these two females are being cleansed by their instructors, in respect to their pasts and their former social and emotional lives as well.

Schnak's growth as a character is questioned due to the relative lack of information Davies provides his readers concerning her developmental process. She is presumedly involved in a nurturing relationship with Gunilla, when suddenly the reader is informed that she is in love with Geraint Powell (LO 374). Gunilla, as Sir Benedict before her, sees this as a further nurturing of Schnak's growth as a woman and tells Darcourt:

> ...it was bound to happen. She must try everything...I am not such a romantic as to think of it as the great educational force--broadening her experience, enlarging her vision, and all that nonsense--but it is something everybody feels who is not a complete cabbage. (LO 375)

Unlike Domdaniel, Gunilla sees Schnak's new love interest as a progression in her human development, not her musical growth. In A Mixture of Frailties, the two were intertwined and inseparable. The reader is surprised again when Schnak's body is taken from the theatre after an attempted suicide (LO 406). Davies does virtually nothing to develop the relationship between Schnak and Geraint, and then creates a character that is so weak and socially inept that she impulsively decides to commit suicide because of her unrequited love. This is surely not an example of the growth that is supposed to have taken place within Schnak throughout the entire novel. At least Giles succeeds in his attempt to kill himself, even if it is only through Monica's intervention. Davies himself says,

"...I have my own ideas about suicide. Often it is a cry for help. And many a suicide who fails deep down inside himself is aware that his action is a shriek for help" (Davis 33). The lack of romantic response Schnak experiences with Geraint, parallels Monica's affair with Giles, where all she desired was to make him love her. As Darcourt points out, "Poor old Schnak was in the grip of one of the great errors of a frenzied lover. She thought because she loved, she could provoke love in return. Everybody does it, at some time" (LO 411). Apparently, for Davies unrequited love is an experience young female artists must undergo in order to mature both musically and emotionally.

The homosexual relationship depicted in The Lyre of Orpheus is ongoing, public knowledge and one of the most influential relationships in the novel. With the exception of Professor Penelope Raven, who describes Gunilla and Schnak as "poofynooks" (LO 210), and questions, "...haven't we some responsibility? I mean, are we delivering this kid gagged and bound into the hands of that old bull-dyke?" (LO 210), there is little opposition to their new-found interest in each other. In fact, as Maria correctly points out:

> She's probably the first person who has ever been nice to Schnak...Very likely the first person to talk to Schnak about music seriously and not just as an instructor. If it means a few rolls in the hay...what about it? (LO 211)

This mood of acceptance is carried over from A Mixture of Frailties, where Monica's instructors saw her relationship with Giles as a way of increasing her potential as a singer,

without regard towards her own moral dilemmas. The second time around Davies creates a female with no morals, so the only indignant person is a female professor who is suspected of being a latent homosexual herself. By the time The Lyre of Orpheus is published, homosexuality is no longer the 'taboo' issue it was in the 1950s, therefore negating some of the 'shock' impact Davies was presumedly hoping for.

In both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, Davies creates one other substantial female figure to carry on intriguing sub-plots largely set apart from the plights of Monica and Schnak. In A Mixture of Frailties, this secondary character is Veronica Vambrance Bridgetower. While her social and emotional development was documented in the second novel of the Salterton trilogy, Leaven of Malice (1954), her situation becomes more serious in the concluding novel of the trilogy. Her mother-in-law's will stipulates that she and her husband must produce a son before they can inherit the substantial estate Mrs. Louisa Bridgetower has left behind (MF 17). Veronica's struggle comes from dealing with the fact that, as she confides in her husband, "I've met rather too many people who've hinted that our marriage killed your mother" (MF 11), and in having the entire weight of satisfying the terms of the will placed upon her shoulders, since it is she who will produce the baby.

Another important aspect to the inclusion of Veronica in the novel is the fact that she provides the readers with a Canadian, or Saltertonian, counterpart to the European

traveller created in Monica. Veronica assists in providing a basis for comparison between Europe and Canada, even though she is a great deal more mature than Monica ever could be. Peterman asserts that Davies

> ...sets his portrait of the artist as a young girl in a Salterton frame, so that the continuing struggles of Pearl and Solly in a provincial context can counterpoint and inform Monica Gall's painful progress as an artist on an international scale. (Peterman 102)

An argument may be made against Peterman's claim that Monica's artistic progress in Europe is 'painful.' While her horrendously abusive relationship with Giles would certainly not be considered her most positive and joyful European experience, her remaining three years can hardly be considered a struggle. Aside from her skimping to save money during her first unproductive month in England, the Bridgetower Trust was forcing money at her to spend in any manner she desired, and she was surrounded by individuals who were experts in the field of music and recognized and encouraged her talent. This was far more extensive attention than she ever received in Salterton. However, the main point to be considered in Peterman's statement is his accurate assumption that Veronica and Monica were designed as contrasts to one another and Veronica was specifically created as a touchstone to measure the influence Europe was having upon Monica. Monica's progress from the lower reaches of society far outstrips Veronica's. Davies may simply use both females to provide his readers with two distinct examples of different ends of reaching the same means: money. While Davies does not overstate this fact, both women

are happiest when they are endowed with the most money. Coincidentally, money for both women comes via the same source: their husbands. Success, for Davies, is apparently measured strictly in terms of money.

Veronica is also a prime example of the role identity plays in this novel. Her father calls her "Pearl," while Solly informs his Uncle George that her name "...is also Veronica, and that is what she likes me to call her" (MF 10). Her husband also refers to her as "Ronny" (MF 23). On her voyage across the Atlantic, Monica contemplates a more artistically appropriate name; "...Monique Gallo took shape in her mind" (MF 89). When Puss Pottinger suggests Monica take on the stage name "Gallica" (MF 292), Dean Knapp voices opposition to Monica's desire to retain her own name. He tells the Trust, "A career in art must often mean great changes in personality--much abandoned in the past, and much learned. I've sometimes thought we might all be the better for taking new names when we discover our vocations" (MF 292). Veronica's life did change when she stopped being Pearl for her father. However, unlike Veronica, Monica realizes that taking a stage name was part of her early misconception concerning the musical world she was about to enter. It would suit Monica's social climb much better to change her name to Lady Domdaniel instead.

Veronica's counterpart in The Lyre of Orpheus is Maria Magdalena Theotoky Cornish. While Veronica had completed her undergraduate work and had secured a position on the library staff as well as being special assistant in the Music

Room because she had been "... a particularly apt pupil in Music Appreciation" (LM 320), Maria's education is more extensive. As she informs Parlabane, "I'm getting on with the work that will eventually make me a Doctor of Philosophy: (RA 28). In this respect, both she and Veronica have been encouraged in their educational pursuits. Maria's more ambitious goal may only be a sign of her advanced intelligence over Veronica since Maria can understand a number of languages. It may also be a sign that Davies believes females in the 1980s are more capable, and allowed, to climb further on the ladder of success. Veronica's uncommon position as a female university graduate in the 1950s would be unremarkable in the period Davies was involved with writing The Lyre of Orpheus.

With the exceptional educational background of these two young women firmly established, one would assume Davies would provide them with equally fascinating careers following their tenure in school. Instead, the reader discovers Veronica, a female university graduate in the 1950s, had advanced to the level where she had "...learned to pick up recordings by their edges only, to wipe them with a chamois, and to place them on the spindle of the costly, fretful machine" (LM 320). Similarly, in contemporary terms, Maria abruptly discontinues her studies in Rabelais to marry Arthur Cornish and, when asked by Darcourt if she would return to school, Maria replies, "I may take a year out to get used to being married. But I'll be back" (RA 319). By the end of The Lyre of Orpheus, Maria has not returned to school and she struggles throughout the novel

with her unsurety as to her position in life. Veronica views money in terms of its potential for their salvation from a mediocre existence, while Maria sees money as an obstacle between herself and her scholarly endeavours. Just as Monica strove to assimilate herself with the European artists that surrounded her, even going so far as to use profanity to try to fit in (MF 204), Maria does everything she can to maintain a semblance of the struggling academic.

As in A Mixture of Frailties, the narrative focus in The Lyre of Orpheus alternates between examinations of Maria's progress in adapting to her awkward situation and Schnak's development as a social character. The main focus, however, unlike A Mixture of Frailties, is Maria's dilemma, not Schnak's. Sam Solecki writes:

> The novel's main weakness is that Maria is just too static and undeveloped a character to sustain a novel structurally and thematically dependent on her. Unlike Monica Gall, the appealing heroine of A Mixture of Frailties, she never convinces us to take her emotional turmoil, her anxieties, seriously. (Solecki 31)

Much of the action in The Lyre of Orpheus centres around the birth of a baby, just as in A Mixture of Frailties, but the difference is in the circumstances surrounding the baby's conception and Maria's role in it. Since the baby is not Arthur's but his best friend's, Geraint Powell, the reader would assume this would be one of the main focuses in the novel. Instead, it is virtually brushed off with the reader feeling sympathy for no-one. On the occasion of informing Darcourt about the unusual circumstances surrounding her pregnancy, Darcourt

notes, "She was wearing a red pant-suit, and had a red scarf tied around her hair, and she smiled and tossed her head and rolled her eyes in a way that Darcourt had never seen before. Maria was not there to confess or repent, but to tease and defend" (LO 242). Even if Maria was as fooled by Geraint as she claims she was (LO 249), in respect to her not knowing she was making love to someone other than her husband, her behaviour and attitude are entirely incomprehensible, even to a modern reader. Davies places far too much emphasis on a gypsy background Maria does not really want any involvement with, to rationalize her behaviour as acceptable. Again, since Davies has involved so many characters in his story, he is not able to provide his readers with the same focus on their plights as he did on Monica's, even though The Lyre of Orpheus is substantially longer than A Mixture of Frailties. There is not enough involvement between the reader and characters in The Lyre of Orpheus to be shocked by anything; they are virtual strangers.

In considering the female characters in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, one must examine the mothers found in both novels since they exert a great deal of influence upon their children, both positively and negatively. Monica's mother is essentially depicted as a good character, although the unpredictable mood swings she continuously undergoes do detract from her being an entirely positive influence on her daughter. Monica is denied stability from her mother since, following an extended period of depression, she would

draw herself out of it for a few days of hysteria, only to slip away again. There is no basis for a foundation of communication between mother and daughter. Maria's mother, Madame Laoutaro, undergoes incredible changes in mood as well, but they are more predictable, occuring generally when she is cross with her daughter. Maria describes one of their arguments thus:

> On and on she raved, enjoying herself immensely; I knew that in the end she would rave herself into a good temper, and then there would be endearments...and her affection would be as high-pitched as her wrath. Nothing for me to do but play my part, that of the broken, repentant daughter, supposedly living in the sunshine or shade of a Mother's affection. (RA 122)

All three of the children who are most influenced by their mothers, Monica, Maria, and Solly, play the parts their mothers design for them. Maria becomes the dutiful gypsy daughter in her mother's home, Monica convinces her mother that she has been a 'good girl' in England, and Solly moves his new bride into his mother's house at Mrs. Bridgetower's request. While Madame Laoutaro's method of inspiring affection may be unique, and condemned by most social services since physical violence normally accompanies Maria's mother's verbal abuse, mother and daughter are united following the performance of this strange ritual. Mrs. Bridgetower's mood is consistently dark and consuming and Solly is never allowed to relate to her except as an object of hatred since she is successful in controlling his life, or as a person inspiring guilt because Solly realizes he is all his mother has left. Similarly, Mrs. Hopkin-Griffiths, Giles' mother, is interested

entirely in her social position and in the dream that her son will someday relinquish his foolish notion of being a composer. She is included as an upper-class annoyance and as a symbol of all that Giles has left behind. This is her only contribution to her son's life.

All three mothers wield various amounts of control over their children's lives, but Davies makes it abundantly clear that any amount of control is important to these women. In Monica's case, it is her fear of angering or hurting her mother, especially with her manic-depressive tendencies, that allows Ma Gall to exhibit some degree of control. As Monica reflects on what she has and has not informed her family of concerning her time in Europe, she notes:

> That was the trouble; you couldn't tell Ma anything really important without running a risk of hurting her. And it went without saying that her sharpness arose from hurt feelings; question that, and you might find yourself thinking it sprang from ignorance, jealousy and meanness, which was inadmissable; loyalty could not permit such thoughts. (MF 265)

However, Monica does see the influence Ma Gall once had upon her yielding, since she now knows to withhold information in order to avoid confrontation. Upon her mother's death, "Monica discovers that her mother's ideas of good and bad would not do for her. At the same time she recognizes that her mother has a lively imagination and that in this they are very much alike..." (Morley 102). With her mother gone, Monica is free of Salterton and free of her mother's attempts at imparting her own moral standards upon her daughter. Monica's time in Europe has provided her with enough strength of

character and personal growth to realize that she can incorporate some of her mother's beliefs into her own, without fear of censure from a manic-depressive parent.

While both Madame Laoutaro and Mrs. Bridgetower exert a large proportion of control over their children, they share more similarities between themselves than they do with Ma Gall. Ma Gall's wrath is not exhibited anywhere nearly as sharply as either one of the other two mothers and she takes less of an interest in her daughter's welfare, therefore making her appear to be a rather weaker parental influence. Mrs. Bridgetower places a "Dead Hand" (MF 40) upon Solly and Veronica's marital relationship by controlling their present lives and future comfort from the grave. The control this mother exerts is broken by her daughter-in-law, not her son, since Veronica gives birth to a son in Louisa's former bedroom. In Madame Laoutaro's case, while her love for Maria is genuine, it can also be seen as difficult for Maria to handle. As Maria describes her relationship with her mother:

> I knew she loved me deeply, but...there were times when it was a burden, and its demands cruel. To live with my Mother meant living according to her beliefs, which were in almost every way at odds with what I had learned elsewhere. (RA 123)

All three children are similar in that their own beliefs and way of living in some way conflict with their mother's views. Monica and Solly overcome the conflict and eliminate control upon the deaths of their mothers, with Solly taking more time to eliminate the hold his mother continues to have following her death. According to Davies' plot, only death and meeting

the stipulations in a will can resolve the conflict between a parent and child's battle for domination. This may be the reason why Maria continues to struggle with her mother and her gypsy heritage at the conclusion of The Lyre of Orpheus, because Madame Laoutaro is still alive. In Davies' fictitious world, he does not create a solution to the problems of feuding relatives without including death.

Similarly, all three mothers are convinced that they have in some manner been slighted by their children. Ma Gall had a "...deep conviction that there was something salty, honest and salutary about bad grammar; it checked a tendency in the girls to get stuck-up notions" (MF 73). Therefore, when Monica returns home from England speaking in the refined manner she has been taught, Ma Gall believes her daughter has been taken from her. Mrs. Bridgetower adheres to the notion that she has been slighted by her son when Solly falls in love with another woman other than herself. Since she is no longer the dominant female figure in his life, she designs her will to exemplify her distress at Solly's decision to marry. Madame Laoutaro's anger stems from a source similar to Mrs. Bridgetower's. As Maria explains:

> The root of much trouble was that I was to get the whole of the money that was in trust for me when I became twenty-five, and would receive all the capital of Mamusia's trust when she died. It appeared to her...that I had scooped the pile, that her adored Tadeusz had somehow done the dirty on her, and that she was close to destitution. (RA 127)

The compulsion these women exhibit for total domination of their children, especially Mrs. Bridgetower and Madame Laoutaro, bor-

ders upon obsessive behaviour. Certainly Mrs. Bridgetower may be seen as the most irrational of the group, but they each in her own way, seek to have their children behave in the manner that would best suit the mother's wants and needs. These women are not dealing with infants, yet each of the offspring do allow their mother's control to some degree. Unfortunately, once they have some control, the mothers want it all. Perhaps since the husbands of both Mrs. Bridgetower and Madame Laoutaro predeceased them, they overcompensate by demanding more affection and attention from the only family they have left.

Davies provides both Monica and Maria with lower class counterparts in the forms of Alice Gall and Mabel Crane. Both these women are meant to represent everything that the worldly and European educated Monica and wealthy Maria are not. On the eve of Monica's farewell party, Davies gives his readers a description of a character akin to Cinderella's evil older sister:

> ...Alice was the rebel; she was sick of the Thirteeners, and she was pretty sick of Ma. She was also sick of Monica, and the Bridgetower Trust had deepened her disgust with her sister's pretensions to culture. Alice was noisily anti-intellectual, though she had no clear notion of what it was that she was opposing. (MF 74)

Alice's pretensions grow even more pronounced when she has a husband she intends to push up the ladder of success. She demands to hold her mother's funeral at a more socially acceptable church than the Thirteenth Apostle Tabernacle, on the slim chance that her husband's employer might attend (MF 284).

Therefore, Alice is attempting to ensure that her husband appears at his most appealing in the hope that he will receive more money from his employer to pass on to his loving and supportive wife. When Alice informs Monica that "...I've got my own way to make. I'm not being carried by anybody else's money" (MF 284), she does not realize how inaccurate her statement is, for she relies entirely upon her husband's money. While both Monica and Alice spring from the same background, they are both fed with the same desire for money as a measure of success. Unfortunately for Alice, Monica has more money from the Trust and her future husband than Alice could ever push her husband to make.

Mabel Crane, better known as Sweetness, is a character like Alice, but she possesses a more soft-spoken nature. Sweetness is entirely dependent upon Al and envious of Maria because she leads a more comfortable, financially stable life. While Sweetness is not as socially conscious as Alice, she does realize that Al's overzealous pursuit of his Ph.D. comes before everything else, including her. For all Sweetness' unquestioning public support and admiration for Al, she "...sometimes wondered if Al knew how much she was sacrificing to his career. As women have wondered, no doubt, since first mankind was troubled by glimmerings of what we now call art, and scholarship" (LO 367). In this respect, Sweetness differs from Alice because she apparently had some career objectives of her own that had been put off for Al's scholastic aspirations. Alice's only career objective appears to be to ensure

that Chuck continues to make more money. Maria, unlike Alice, is in the same contemplative position as Sweetness because she must decide if giving up the life of a respected, aspiring academic was worth the sacrifice in order to become a co-signatory on a cheque in support of other academics and their artistic endeavours. While Arthur is certainly more attentive to Maria than Al is to Sweetness, and the Cornishes have more money than Alice could ever push Chuck to make, Maria is still not content. Davies is clearly indicating that, although these women are faced with very different dilemmas, most of them having to do with money, a secure financial situation or honest intentions do not ensure happiness for anyone.

Parallels may also be drawn between the Cranes as a couple and a similar anticipatory pair included in A Mixture of Frailties as comic relief, Lorne and Meg McCorkill. Owen has written that Davies' picture of England "...is put badly out of focus by the caricature of a Canadian couple in London. They are very funny but too far from any human reality to make a point" (Owen 62). In actuality, the McCorkills border more upon the absurd or ridiculous rather than the humorous, due to the lengths Davies goes to in order to demonstrate exactly how anti-British this couple is who ironically reside in Britain. Everything from the rubber-base paint, to the appliances, to the food, is shipped from Canada. Lorne, entering the room "...wearing moccasin slippers, and...struggling into a sweat-shirt which had the name of a western Canadian university printed across its chest" (MF 122), could have passed as a

spokesperson for a Canadian tourism poster. The couple's irrational fears do more for displaying their own ignorance rather than their caution and Davies, so obviously pro-British throughout A Mixture of Frailties, has great fun showing how irrational and ignorant Canadians can be. The McCorkills do nothing to provoke patriotism, even in Monica, who departs from the McCorkills feeling more loyal to England than Canada.

The culturally displaced McCorkills are remarkably similar to the Cranes, who Darcourt describes as dressed for "...the summer of Southern California..." (LO 327), not the cool Canadian spring they have just flown into. Both couples are uprooted because of the husband's career and both are used to impart important lessons. Davies himself says,

> They [the McCorkills] come at a point in Monica's life when she is breaking away and they help her to the sudden realization of some of the limits of Salterton views. She is dismayed by their desire to maintain a kind of Canadian provincialism in the face of a different kind of experience. (Davis 57)

Through her experience with the McCorkills, Monica learns about hypocrisy and begins to acknowledge the fact that her own views do not need to coincide with those of the people around her, but she is not obliged to inform them of the discrepancy. Maria, much to her own astonishment, sees an intriguing similarity between herself and Sweetness Crane: both have put their lives on hold in support of their husbands. While it may be easy for Maria to berate Sweetness' simplicity and cheerful attitude, she cannot deny that this woman is a parody of herself (LO 334). The existence of an enormous amount of

money cannot erase the fact that both Monica and Maria, through the intervention of these odd couples, learn to appreciate what they have and grow enough to acknowledge that they possess the strength to change what they do not like about their lives. For all their problems, both Monica and Maria may be comforted in knowing that their lives, outlooks, and opinions are not as rigid or restricted as those of either the McCorkills or the Cranes.

Like the female characters in both novels, virtually every male character seeks to control both the situation he is involved in and the individuals around him. While some of the female characters also seek to dominate other characters, those they wish to control are struggling to break free. In the case of the males, those they wield enormous influence over are more than contented with their situation. Some of the male figures examined here may differ in their aggressiveness, but the parallels Davies creates between the males found in both works are similar to those the female characters share.

Through the inclusion of Giles Revelstoke in his male cast of characters, Davies is able to provide his readers with an accurate display of the changes Monica undergoes in her attitude towards sex, since Giles is Monica's mentor and first lover. Following their first entire night together, Monica reassures herself of the increasingly dominant position she presumes she is taking in Giles' life, by thinking, "Though he had spoken coldly to her, and bargained, and said flatly that

he did not love her, she was confident. She would win him at last. He should be brought to say it" (MF 222). Unlike Davies' blasé attitude concerning sex, Monica initially believes that by giving herself to Giles sexually, she will eventually win his love. Davies himself describes Monica as "...marvellous because she is simple, she is not all complicated and tricksy. You see that kind of girl in Persis Kinwellmarshe. Persis is really just a lay; Monica is someone in whom you can repose" (Davis 56). The perverseness of this is that it would appear that Monica, not Giles' other frequent bed companion Persis, is the 'complicated and tricksy' character. Monica is laying herself out to be the perfect composer's companion in order to secure the love of Giles. However, Giles is only interested in love for his music and frequent sexual encounters with whatever woman is closest, in order to boost both his musical and male ego.

Giles possesses distinct similarities to both Schnak and Geraint Powell. With respect to Schnak, both are composers, whose focus is on the Romantic period, with Giles being more advanced in producing a work of his own creation rather than continuing the work of another composer. Both have disastrous trials at conducting which bring about suicide attempts by them both. While Giles' suicide attempt is viewed as largely due to his artistic temperament, Schnak's is depicted as more of a mental problem, a frivolous cry for help over unrequited love. Both characters are also young amateurs who are driven to prove themselves to their musical superiors, Giles in completing his

own opera, The Golden Asse, and Schnak in pursuit of her doctoral degree.

While Giles' musical counterpart is Schnak, his artistic one is Geraint Powell. Peterman asserts that "...Davies probes in the character of Revelstoke the interrelation of the demonic and creative in the artistic temperament" (Peterman 107), and continues by writing, "What also emerges is the picture of a self-indulgent man who allowed his creative energies to lapse into venomous attacks upon others and self-loathing" (Peterman 107). Aside from the fact that both males are Welsh, Geraint possesses virtually the same nature as Giles, but since he is a man of the theatre, he is able to gloss his manipulation of people over, while still getting his own way. Davies provides his readers with proof of Geraint's selfish motivation, when he has the actor muse, "He [Geraint] meant to use his colleagues, and the Cornish Foundation, for his own purposes...He would ply the whip, and drive everyone to the last inch of their abilities, in order to get what he wanted" (LO 132). However, these characters' manipulation of individuals eventually forces them into the role of outcasts, since Geraint must redeem himself both for sleeping with Maria and encouraging Schnak's helpless infatuation, while Giles commits suicide instead of apologizing for his disastrous turn at conducting and verbally abusing those to whom he is closest.

Both of these male characters are also used to demonstrate relevant aspects of sexual exploitation and deviance. Darcourt muses, "We live in an age of sexual liberation...when

people are not supposed to take marital fidelity seriously, and when adultery and fornication, and all uncleanness are perfectly okay--except when they come near home" (LO 264). While Giles is involved in two illicit sexual relationships in A Mixture of Frailties, Davies updates the drama by involving Geraint in an adulterous liaison with his best friend's wife. Both men are also far too willing to terminate their own lives when they come to a tumultuous point in their existences. As Sir Benedict explains, Giles' successful suicide had been provoked by the fact that Giles "...had been under unusual strain during the revision of The Golden Asse, which had brought on exaggerated alternations of melancholy and defiant high spirits..." (MF 343). While Geraint may not have actively been attempting to take his life when he drunkenly drove his car into a tree following a midnight rampage through a park, he does admit to Darcourt, "This is punishment for sin, and I have nothing to do but accept it, swallow it, suffer it, take up my cross, prostrate myself before the Throne, and die ...I am trying to die" (LO 266). Instead of facing up to their mistakes and admitting responsibility for their actions as mature individuals are supposed to do, both men are dramatically swept away by their artistic influences and seek an easy and immature escape from their dilemmas.

A broad and incidental similarity also exists between the earlier and later novels, using both Geraint and Giles, with the addition of Arthur and Sir Benedict. In The Lyre of Orpheus, Darcourt notes, "A deep Freudian would almost

certainly declare that there was, between Arthur and Geraint, some dank homosexual tie, working itself out in possession of the same woman" (LO 317). While they are not best friends, the same situation eventually arises between Giles and Sir Benedict. When Giles explodes following his miserable failure as a conductor, he informs Sir Benedict:

> I've written an opera, and you've put the finishing touches on it. And I've made a singer, and you are in the process of putting the finishing touches on her. She's been my mistress for nearly two years, but you always work best on somebody else's material. (MF 331)

The difference between Giles and Geraint in this situation is that Geraint stole someone else's woman, while Giles gave his up. However, more significant is the similarity discerned in that both view women as objects to be controlled. Monica is Giles' 'creation,' while Geraint sleeps with Maria purely to demonstrate the fact that people can be deceived when they choose to be. Neither man provides the slightest indication that love, or even strong feeling, accompanied their sexual conquests.

Arthur Cornish and Sir Benedict Domdaniel are powerful characters, but their influential abilities take on very distinct forms. Arthur desperately desires to assume the role of a patron of the arts, both in his own name and on behalf of his deceased uncle, Francis Cornish. Arthur is willing to spend exorbitant amounts of money to support those that have been blessed with abilities he lacks. Without Arthur's involvement in Schnak's project, the opera never would have taken place. While other characters, such as Gunilla and

Geraint, take power away from Arthur as they contribute to most of the artistic work involved with the opera's completion and staging, Arthur remains the original driving force. Arthur is similar to Sir Benedict in this respect, for it is Sir Benedict's guiding force that manipulates Monica into meeting the people she does, having the experiences she does, and becoming the singer she eventually becomes. It is Sir Benedict who sends Monica for lessons to both Molloy and Giles, Sir Benedict who packs her off to Neuadd Goch to meet Giles' family, and Sir Benedict who ensures she is taught how to behave like a lady by Amy Neilson in Paris. Without Sir Benedict's assistance, Monica would more than likely have been left as hungry and shivering as she was during her first month in England. In fact, without Sir Benedict's intervention, Monica never would have received the positive recommendation that sent her to Europe in the first place.

Another parallel which may be drawn between Sir Benedict and Arthur is the fact that they are both relative outsiders. When the Cornish Foundation is left off the opera program, Arthur explodes by saying:

> Have you missed the fact that Maria and I have a real, gigantic, and mostly unselfish passion for the arts and we want to create something with our money? I'll go further...we want to be artists so far as we can, and furthermore we want to do something with Uncle Frank's money that he would really have thought worthy. And we're treated like money-bags. Bloody, insensitive, know-nothing money bags. (LO 427)

What Arthur has difficulty understanding is his role as patron. He is not an artist, nor will he ever be, and he must learn to

content himself with the knowledge that he is there to provide financial support for other people's artistic success, and nothing else. Perhaps because Sir Benedict is older than Arthur, he is able to deal with his role as artistic outsider with more grace. Following Giles' suicide, Sir Benedict admits to Monica, "Don't suppose I wasn't fond of Giles myself. I was. Too fond of him, I've often thought. I did all that I could to bring him forward" (MF 361). Sir Benedict concludes by saying:

> Giles was jealous of me, of my reputation, in spite of the twenty years between us. Incredibly stupid of him, because he was something I wasn't--a composer, and I cherished and loved that part of him. But I was a conductor, very much in the limelight, and he wanted to be that, as well as what he was. (MF 362)

Both men long to help those who excel in areas they personally do not and both feel let down by their involvement. To some extent, both men also use other individuals in order to advance their standing in the artistic world. While Arthur relies upon artists to produce influential works of art with his financial backing, which in turn makes him an admirable patron, Sir Benedict relies upon the quality of the composer's work to make him appear as an outstanding conductor. In some manner, both Arthur and Sir Benedict are living vicariously through others, even though they are greatly admired and respected in their own fields.

While Sir Benedict's support for artists is similar to Arthur's, a parallel may also be made between Sir Benedict and Simon Darcourt. These two men are akin in their artistic

sensibilities. While Arthur is only able to provide financial support and encouragement, Sir Benedict provides encouragement from an artistic point of view as well. Since he is a well known conductor, he holds the respect of artists, which is what Arthur so desperately longs to achieve. Simon, as the writer of Francis Cornish's biography and as the main librettist for Schnak's work on Hoffman's opera, is also a member of the artistic community. Patricia Monk illustrates another similarity between these two influential males:

> ...[Simon]...is active in the foreground narrative of the opera as well as in his own. Not only is he responsible for writing the libretto of the opera, as Secretary of the Cornish Trust he is responsible for forwarding the activities of the Trust when Arthur is incapacitated by illness. (Monk 525)

Sir Benedict also performs in the role of mediator, since he is directly responsible for Monica's development as an artist, and he also reports on her progress directly to the Bridgetower Trust. Therefore, while Davies condenses the role of Monica's three instructors into the one in The Lyre of Orpheus, Gunilla, he expands Sir Benedict's role and develops different aspects of his character in both Arthur and Simon.

Davies utilizes a number of characters to display his views on religion and the characters parallel each other in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus. There is the religious sect that Monica and her family belong to, the Thirteenth Apostle Tabernacle. Owen writes, "Her [Monica's] sect is actually too wildly farcical to supply the common-

place atmosphere the pattern demands, but the Thirteeners are quite funny enough to excuse the lapse" (Owen 59). Pastor Sidney Beamis heads the congregation, and is the virtual leader of the Gall household as well. When the Galls are first introduced to the members of the Trust, Pastor Beamis, who "...had not been invited..." (MF 44), joined the meeting because, as he informs the Trust, "...I think I may say that it has been my privilege, under God, to humbly have coaxed along her talent..." (MF 44). The Schnakenburgs, on the other hand, who are strict Lutherans, use more religious rhetoric than Pastor Beamis during their initial meeting with the Cornish Trust. The Schnakenburgs have resorted to praying every day for their daughter's rotting soul, which they freely admit her strict religious upbringing may have helped cause. Darcourt summarizes their religious fervor by telling Arthur and Maria, "They have certainty and depth of belief but they buy it at the price of a joyless, know-nothing attitude toward life. All they ask of God is a kind of spiritual Minimum Wage..." (LO 67). Darcourt continues by comparing the Schnakenburgs' faith to "...a little candle, burning in the night; your Cornish Foundation is...a forty-watt bulb which may light her to a better life. Don't switch off the forty-watt bulb because the candle looks so pitiably weak" (LO 68). Since religious denomination is brought up with both sets of parents upon their initial meetings with their respective Trusts, Davies does an adequate job of displaying how religion guides these simple people. They only want what is right by

God, or at least by God's earthly representative. In both instances, their religious backgrounds are seen as largely negative influences and the portrait Davies paints of both sets of parents helps to intensify the negative impression of them.

Davies counteracts the rather unusual and stringent religious outlooks of both the Galls and the Schnakenburgs with the inclusion of Dean Knapp in A Mixture of Frailties and Simon Darcourt in The Lyre of Orpheus. These men, both members of Trusts, are apparently meant to symbolize the upper echelons of religious denominations, since they are both Anglican, and are used to bring reason and a rational perspective to everyone. Dean Knapp, who often supports Solly's views in the Trust, does bring the voice of reason to an otherwise absurd situation. Upon learning of Monica's religious tendencies, Dean Knapp disapproves of her eligibility as beneficiary on these grounds: "He had an eighteenth century distaste of Enthusiasm in religion, which he was prepared to defend on theological and philosophical grounds. He disliked the untidy beliefs of the Thirteeners..." (MF 42). While Dean Knapp eventually does support Monica and is an extremely helpful addition to the Bridgetower Trust, his initial thoughts concerning a young woman of whom he has had no prior knowledge are rather disturbing. He may have justifiable cause for his poor opinion of Monica's religious leader, Pastor Beamis, who the Dean had met and "...thought him an ignoramus, and possibly a rogue, as well" (MF 43), but he exhibits an unwarranted religious prejudice against young

Monica.

Darcourt, while as positive and influential as Dean Knapp, also displays attitudes and behaviours one would assume are largely atypical for a highly religious man. Darcourt compares the Schnakenburg's religion to what he terms "real religion," when he tells the Cornishes of

> The favorite weapon of the self-righteous poor. The use of a mean form of religion to gain a status denied to the unbeliever: they tell you the Old, Old Story, and expect you to cave in. And you do. Real religion...is evolutionary and revolutionary and that's what your Cornish Foundation had better be or it will be nothing. (LO 69)

Darcourt is very much the religious revolutionary, since he is also a professor, a writer, and an art thief. Darcourt appears to be battling himself in his search for definition, since he assumes so many roles. However, he is also endorsing the superiority of his own religious beliefs by declaiming the theology of other individuals. Both Dean Knapp and Darcourt are used to illustrate Davies' likely belief that only established religious sects, or more specifically, Anglican Protestantism, provide strength of character.

Davies' views concerning religion may be extended to include art as well. In Davies' own words contained in a speech given in 1976:

> ...I do not believe very much in the God of somebody who hasn't a first-class Devil as well. We have all seen during the past fifty years what happens to God when you try to pretend there is no Devil; God develops rheumatoid arthritis and senile dementia and rumours of his death are heard everywhere, including some of the very advanced church groups. (Davies, One-Half 208)

Davies introduces art into his view, when he states, "Art, I

am utterly convinced, is one of the principal roads by which we find our way to such knowledge of this world and the Universe to which it belongs as may be possible to us" (Davies, One-Half 208). While A Mixture of Frailties cannot definitely be accounted for since this statement was made well after the novel's publication, it can easily be applied to The Lyre of Orpheus, which in turn bears a striking resemblance to A Mixture of Frailties. As is demonstrated extensively in both novels, Monica, Schnak, Simon, and Geraint have all claimed strict religious upbringings. Geraint, whose father was a preacher, believes God "...showed himself in art" (LO 416), which is why he chose a career in the theatre. Simon made a conscious decision early in life to follow a religious path. All four of these characters also end up finding their true vocations and their salvations while pursuing some artistic calling. Art, according to Davies, may not be a replacement for religion, but, if the two are combined, it can certainly be seen as providing a path to personal illumination. At the time of the publication of A Mixture of Frailties, this would have been a more risky sentiment to express, since religion was seen as the only true inspiration.

It seems only logical that since Davies would place such an emphasis on religion in both novels, that there would be some discussion of death and the afterlife as well. Significantly, both novels do include characters who have passed away, yet whose influence on earth has not been terminated. While the legacies of both Francis Cornish and Mrs.

Bridgetower live on in the Trusts they have initiated through their wills, Mrs. Bridgetower's spirit intends to retain some of its earthly control. While trapped within the constrictions of her mother-in-law's final stipulation, Veronica muses:

> Who could say that Louisa Hansen Bridgetower was dead? Freed from the cumbrous, ailing body, freed from any obligation to counterfeit the ordinary goodwill of mortal life, her spirit walked abroad, working out its ends and asserting its mastery through a love which was hate, a hatred which was love. (MF 273)

Davies creates Mrs. Bridgetower's spirit to resemble the roaming Catherine Linton, tormenting her beloved Heathcliff from beyond the grave for having forsaken her for another. Davies may simply be attempting to demonstrate that one's influence may not conclude upon one's death, that there is the possibility that death may not mean a total separation from life. Hoy maintains that

> The literal presence of Mrs. Bridgetower's spirit after her death as an agent in the novel is one of Davies' most dramatic representations of the presence in the ordinary world of unknown, awesome powers. (Hoy 82)

Through his use of Mrs. Bridgetower, Davies provides his readers with a contrast to the peaceful endings that most religions preach await their believers in the afterlife.

Davies parallels his use of Mrs. Bridgetower to a large degree with the introduction of E.T.A. Hoffman in The Lyre of Orpheus. Although Hoffman has been dead since 1822, Davies introduces him as a character trapped in limbo. As Hoffman explains, "...I was cut off untimely, and that is why I find myself now in Limbo, in that part of it reserved for those

artists and musicians and writers who never fully realized themselves..." (LO 47). As with Mrs. Bridgetower waiting for the birth of a grandson to release her stranglehold on her son and his marriage, Hoffman waits for an unsuspecting Schnak to free him from his perpetual boredom.

Davies devotes a large portion of both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus to developing very obvious differences between social classes. Within most of the story told in both novels, Davies is describing the lives and attitudes of his more sophisticated, upper class characters. Davies sets aside comparatively little time to develop the characters he includes from the lower portions of society, and allows them only enough space in the novels for other characters, from the upper classes, to comment upon their mediocrity. More startling than Davies' virtual snobbery concerning the less financially secure characters he creates, is the fact that Davies includes no middle class in either of these novels. In his documentation of the progression of two bright music students, he shows the students two extremes in living. Since Davies parallels the economic situations of his characters in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, his inclusion of individuals from the lower classes is apparently intended only to provide comic relief and a depressing background from which his aspiring artists may rise, thus appearing more accomplished.

In both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, Davies' illustrates that one's financial situation affects

every aspect of one's being. In A Mixture of Frailties, Davies sets the working class Galls against the almighty Bridgetower Trust. While the Trust itself consists of Solly and Veronica Bridgetower, who are working diligently to collect the substantial sum they stand to inherit from Solly's deceased mother, Matthew Snelgrove, a lawyer, Dean Knapp, an ecclesiastic, and Puss Pottinger, an antique busy-body, they are collectively in charge of a Trust worth an amount estimated to be well over one million dollars. Since Davies takes advantage of every opportunity made available to discuss how difficult and pitiful the life of an artist is, it would seem understandable and even appropriate if the young artists interviewed by the Trust as potential beneficiaries were depicted as struggling individuals, living a life of poverty in pursuit of their art. However, Davies creates a young woman whose entire family is monetarily disadvantaged and for the most part unconcerned with their impoverished economic state. The Trust is initially very quick to dismiss Monica as a potential beneficiary because of her background. When Solly asks, "Are we going to hold it against the girl that her parents are stupid and dominated by a quack evangelist?" (MF 48) Dean Knapp replies, "You can educate her beyond her parents, and make her into something that they might not recognize, but you will not really raise her very far. You can polish and mount a pebble, but it remains a pebble" (MF 48). Davies is not content to bring Monica from a deprived background. He makes her parents intellectually inferior to

every other character in the novel, he has them blindly following a religious fanatic, and has them concerned about nothing, neither themselves nor the fact that these wealthy individuals seek to take their youngest daughter away from them. Instead of showing pleasure in her talent and good fortune at being hand-picked to be educated in Europe, or hurt by the fact that they cannot provide such an education for Monica, or even angry for the pretentiousness of this group and their offer, they are indifferent, lifeless, willing to be manipulated by apparent aristocrats. Davies cannot make the Galls poor without adding the rest of their shortcomings because, in his perspective, poverty breeds inadequacy.

While Davies expends his satiric wit against the backwater Galls, he afflicts Solly and Veronica Bridgetower with what he would assume to be the most serious problem: lack of money that is rightfully theirs. Davies may not realize it, but he is providing his readers with a glimpse of the unreasonable manner individuals who once had money behave when they no longer do. While the Galls have presumably always been poor, they are plagued by no documented worries. However, once Solly and Veronica discover how much money they presently do not have, they behave as a couple of snivelling children. One of Solly's biggest complaints to Humphrey Cobbler is

> That old Ethel hangs over us and pities us and bullies us because we're poor, and makes a favour of staying here when we'd a thousand times rather she went somewhere else. Just try to teach an extravagant old cook something about economy, if you want to break your heart! (MF 40)

The Galls do not have enough money to pay for Ma Gall's

funeral, while Solly's main concern is maintaining the stamina to impregnate his wife until they produce a son and inherit over a million dollars.

It is the desire of both Monica and Schnak, once they have been exposed to large sums of money, to rise above the meagre social class their parents occupy. Woodcock writes:

> Davies' novels are restricted [to a]...social milieu of Old and New Money, of the false and true intellectual and artistic aspirations of the middle class, and working-class people are introduced only for comic relief...or on the condition that they become transformed and find their way into the cultured bourgeoisie, as Monica Gall does... and Hulda Schnakenburg seems about to do.... (Woodcock 37)

The struggle between Old and New Money can be said to exist in Mrs. Bridgetower's unwillingness to leave her fortune to her son and her son's all-consuming passion to inherit. However, Woodcock mislabels Monica and Schnak as 'middle class,' when they are not. Davies purposely creates the females so their background could be relatively low in order to make their professional rise that much more impressive. Schnak, as Monica before her, is so overcome by the new society she finds herself in, she cannot help but assimilate herself and change as a result of the experience. The change, contradictory to Davies' presumed intentions, is not necessarily for the better.

The Schnakenburgs are virtually identical to the Galls in respect to their low social standing. Dean Wintersen describes Schnak's background as the

> ...essence of mediocrity. Parents utterly commonplace. Father a watch-repairer for one for the big jewellery stores...Mother a sad zero. The only thing that singles them out at all is that they are members of some ultra-

conservative Lutheran group.... (LO 11)

Unconventional religious belief in a lower class family is anything but distinctive for Davies, since the Galls share in this trait. Unlike the Galls who, with the exception of Alice, seem to be unaware of their social position, Darcourt believes the Schnakenburg's "...pretence of simplicity is a clever play for power" (LO 67). Schnak's parents attempt to use their social position against the powerful Cornish Foundation, to make them out to be evil aggressors attempting to steal their simple daughter away. When Mr. Schnakenburg is asked to explain his reasons for not supporting the Foundation's interest in Schnak, he responds:

> We're poor people and you're rich people...You have ideas about all this music and art and other stuff that we don't have and don't want. We can't fight you. The world would say we were standing in Hulda's way. But the world doesn't come first with us. (LO 65)

Even with the Schnakenburgs' strong objections to the Cornish's interference in their daughter's life, and Schnak's indifference as to how she obtains her Ph.D., it appears that the Cornish Foundation is motivated by selfishness. The Foundation must spend money in any way possible in order to appear agreeable in the public's eye because it is assisting an underpriveleged artist and contributing to Canadian art as a whole.

Unlike the Bridgetowers, Arthur and Maria have always had and continue to have a great deal of money at their disposal, and obviously belong to the upper social class. One of their plights is attempting to find an artistic cause that would make them appear most appealing to a public whose support

they believe they need to actualize as complete and fulfilled individuals. The Bridgetowers are searching for public sympathy, not support, for the cruelty Solly's mother has displayed by including stipulations on their rightful inheritance. Both couples also resemble each other in the fact that their main difficulty revolves around the birth of a child. While the Bridgetowers want desperately to conceive and give birth to a son to save them from their impoverished nightmare, Maria all too easily conceives and gives birth to a son by someone other than her husband. All the Bridgetowers desire is what the Cornishes have: money. This they believe is the solution to all their problems. The Cornishes, however, are used to demonstrate the fact that financial stability does not cure all evils. In this respect they go against Davies' other upper class characters who revel in their position, or in the case of the Bridgetowers, seek to regain their former stature. While Solly and Veronica are maritally secure, Arthur and Maria question both their compatibility and entire existence as individuals. Money provides the Cornishes with financial security, but brings them an abundance of problems as well. If they had not chosen to involve themselves with the production of an opera, Geraint would never have become so involved in their lives and would more than likely never been provided with the opportunity or desire to seduce Maria. Davies creates the plot so that the Bridgetowers are given a hint of what life in the lower classes may be like, which only drives them further to regain their financial capital.

In a summation of A Mixture of Frailties, Peterman writes:

> There is...a very strong sense that Monica is cast too definitively as raw material. She can only be stimulated abroad by proper teachers. Good taste, which is mostly foreign, and wealth, which Davies regularly defends, must play their crucial parts in her transformation. (Peterman 112)

This statement, other than the reference to international education, can be seen to adhere to Schnak as well. Both women leave their mediocre homes, become involved with wealthy individuals, and attempt to emulate these individuals in their social behaviours. The main problem is the deliberate distinctions Davies sets up between the classes. Financially poor characters are not simply poor; they are ignorant, proud and easily misguided. It would have made no difference to Schnak's development within the Foundation had she stemmed from middle class parents who were indifferent about both her and her talent. In fact, it would then appear more plausible that Schnak were pursuing an education if she came from a more affluent family. Wealth for Davies, means power and success. Without money, Davies provides his readers with numerous examples of the mental deterioration that follows. Davies' lead female characters have no choice but to aspire to the upper levels of society. Since they are of at least average intelligence, that is the place they belong. Davies has reserved the lower classes for those who do not know any better and do not wish to change their situation; apparently there is no middle ground.

The discrepancies Davies documents between social classes

may be extended to include the manner in which he displays academics in his novels and their differences with the rest of his characters and society as a whole. The educational process Davies has Monica undergo in A Mixture of Frailties is far less formalized than Schnak's university education in The Lyre of Orpheus, but is certainly no less rigorous or constructive. Each of Monica's instructors recognizes her simple nature and naiveté and seeks to replace these traits with something more in accordance to their own educated characters. Monica is required to learn German, French and Italian in a short span of time, and taught to speak a more refined English more suitable to British sensibilities. When Monica thanks Giles for her 'educational' poetry lesson, Giles, perhaps speaking through Davies corrects her:

> ...I wish you wouldn't use words like "educational," which have grown sour from being so much in the wrong people's mouths. What we are doing isn't really educational. It's enlightening...and its purpose is to nurture the spirit. If formal education has any bearing on the arts at all, its purpose is to make critics, not artists. Its usual effect is to cage the spirit in other people's ideas.... (MF 157)

Since A Mixture of Frailties was published in 1958 and Davies was not appointed Master of Massey College until 1961, there is no apparent discrepancy between his written views and his actual life. If this statement is meant to signify Davies' views concerning formal education at that time, in Davies' estimation, Monica is being instructed in the best possible manner. While an argument may certainly be made for the possibility of enlightenment within institutionalized education,

Davies creates the characters in A Mixture of Frailties to depict his views during that period. Monica's education as a singer stems from her weekly radio sessions with the Heart and Hope Gospel Quartet, to the more 'formal' instruction found in being bounced from one language teacher to another and being taught poetry from a music composer.

Davies' views concerning formal, hierarchically-based education undergo a tremendous transformation by the time he has completed The Lyre of Orpheus in 1988. Davies, now Master Emeritus of Massey College, includes in his cast of characters a plethora of professors representing every field of study and three Ph.D. candidates. This replaces the three instructors who worked out of their homes and one amateur music student who kept accounting records straight and did the typing for a critical magazine as part of her program of study in A Mixture of Frailties. In The Lyre of Orpheus, a conversation does not take place without Davies displaying the "...professional propensity for dragging apt quotations into every conversation" (Whitaker 168), that all professors are supposed to possess. The reader progresses from naive Monica's process of enlightenment where she must be informed as to the meaning of impotence at the age of twenty (MF 153), to Maria's use of the word "Rabelais" to complete every sentence she utters, even with her gypsy mother who has a limited understanding of the English language. Following one of the frequent cerebral brawls Davies depicts in The Lyre of Orpheus, Arthur questions Maria as to the reasoning behind the

perpetual need for academics, who are colleagues, to bicker. Maria replies, "It doesn't mean anything...It's just that they can't bear anybody else to have an advantage, even for a moment" (LO 150). This artistic competition is also present in A Mixture of Frailties, but Davies does not attempt to overwhelm his readers with disputes between musicians using nothing but musical terminology. If anything, the argument Davies illustrates between professors over the authenticity of Maria's Arthurian feast distances readers and makes them ponder as to the lack of realism and foolishness these characters are exhibiting. Davies, as an academic leader, is presumably attempting to display his former colleagues in a flattering light. However, the display Davies provides is only comic.

Davies includes mythology in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, but the types of myths he utilizes varies significantly in both works. Davies is influenced by what he believes is the Canadian myth, in his creation of characters. Davies describes a national myth as "...the sort of attitude which most people take for granted, the belief that nobody questions because nobody troubles to put it in concrete terms" (Davies, One-Half 272). Davies does attempt to add some definition to the myth of the Canadian nation, by describing the

> ...Myth of Innocence or Moral Superiority: deep in our hearts we Canadians cherish a notion...that we are a simple folk, nourished on the simpler truths of Christianity, in whom certain rough and untutored instincts of nobility assert themselves...such a Myth of

> Innocence is really a manifestation of pride, and it means Innocence in comparison with the flawed virtue of somebody else. (Davies, One-Half 275)

Both Monica and Schnak, and their respective families, can be deemed influenced by this ideology. This, in turn, relates back to the previous discussion concerning Davies' representation of the lower classes. In the innocence of both the Galls and the Schnakenburgs, there is pride in the beliefs they uphold. Monica specifically, though innocent upon her arrival in England, is made stronger by the fallen individuals that surround her. The Myth of Moral Superiority may also be seen to affect both the Bridgetower and Cornish Trusts. They acknowledge their superior financial position over their culture's less fortunate individuals and take it upon themselves to attempt to raise at least one individual from their low state and move her to a more socially acceptable level.

On the subject of mythology, Davies asserts, "I very strongly believe...that life has a strong mythic and fairy tale quality. And people don't recognize that they are living out myths or mythic patterns or archetypal situations" (Davis 34). The belief clearly extends into his written work, since A Mixture of Frailties is formulated as a fairy tale, with Monica playing the role of Cinderella, Sir Benedict and Giles vying for the position of Prince Charming, and the Bridgetower Trust reluctantly cast in the role of Fairy Godmother. However, these characters may also be definitively cast in the roles that make up the Canadian myth that Davies envisions as one of the country's guiding forces. Canada is typically

depicted as a rural country, hence Davies' decision to create Salterton as Monica's birthplace. The figures in Salterton, for example, are archetypal or traditional literary figures. Monica's mother and Mrs. Bridgetower are seen as the dead hands of the old order, since both women continue to exert influence over their children ever after they have passed away. Humphrey Cobbler is the Lord of Misrule since he is continuously prompting individuals to act against their better nature. Dean Knapp represents the wise old man, or oracle, since he is largely the voice of reason. Alice is the antagonist, or eiron, desperate to escape but confined to her roots. Monica is the homespun heroine, the virtuous daughter eager to explore beyond her hometown surroundings. These characters are largely unrefined and ignorant. This mythical town and its archetypal inhabitants are set against the more cultured and sophisticated myth that is Europe. Europe signifies everything that is proper and established. In this respect, the myth is enlarged to include Europe as the representative over-protective mother, while Canada is the struggling child determined to prove its independence in every way. As is indicated by Monica's education in England, the child, no matter how mature, cannot escape from the experienced guidance and influence of its parents. Thus, the myth found in A Mixture of Frailties is more representative of reality, while The Lyre of Orpheus' mythological references centre more upon the literary. Davies does attempt to fuse the mythological references found in both novels with the

inclusion of Giles' favorite ring in A Mixture of Frailties. Monica describes the ring as consisting of "...a green stone in which was engraved a figure of Orpheus bearing his lyre. The naked god was incised, and could be transferred to wax, as a seal" (MF 356). Perhaps Davies is including this as an indication that the characters found in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus are sealed within their mythological fates.

One of the most significant differences between A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, is Davies' decision to put a substantial emphasis upon mythology in The Lyre of Orpheus. While the archetypal references in the earlier novel are more subtle, Davies includes a mythological character in the title of his later work. Both Arthur and Schnak may be seen as portraying Orpheus. Arthur is providing the financial support for the entire opera project. As John Warden writes concerning the myth of Orpheus, "As tamer of beasts he is the champion of humanism, symbol of power of the word to soften the wild hearts of man and bring civilization" (Warden xii). Arthur, through his money, is attempting to merge the worlds of art and finance, to make the attaining of one easier through the sponsorship of the other. Darcourt, through his work on the opera's libretto and Francis Cornish's biography, is artistically attempting to leave his mark upon the world, thereby influencing future artists. Gunilla may also be seen in this role in an artistic sense, since her supervision is guiding the entire opera project; her knowledge makes the

music flow. Schnak is the most obvious choice as representative of Orpheus, since her musical pursuits assist in opening the "...door of the underworld" (LO 37), and freeing Hoffman from limbo. Schnak, as Giles before her in A Mixture of Frailties, is depicted as Orpheus, "...the self-absorbed artist, the quester after the unattainable...The artist by his magic descends into himself to seek a world of absolutes" (Warden xiii). Both of these composers reach down into themselves and attempt to illuminate the world through their music, just as their predecessor, Orpheus.

Davies even goes so far as to represent one myth with another. While E.T.A. Hoffman himself is not a fictitious mythical composer, his plight in limbo is centred upon mythology and metaphysics, that those who have unfinished business upon earth may not gain direct entry into heaven. As Warden stipulates, "...Orpheus is the go-between, narrowing the gap between person and thing, between living and dead" (Warden xiii). Hoffman is this character, metaphysically influencing Schnak through his music to complete his opera, which in turn inspires a multitude of others.

Hoffman's actual childhood story has been incorporated into the lives of Monica, Schnak, and Giles. Ronald Taylor writes that Hoffman's mother, "...poor in health and given to fits of hysteria, hardly concerned herself with his upbringing..." (Taylor 10). As has already been documented, this is virtually identical to Monica's mother. Hoffman's "...education passed into the hands of a middle-aged bachelor

uncle who offered much discipline but little understanding of children" (Taylor 10). Schnak's parents, especially her father, were admittedly strong disciplinarians throughout Schnak's upbringing.

While Davies is consciously and obviously using mythology to update The Lyre of Orpheus from its predecessor, A Mixture of Frailties, Davies also appears to use it in a circumspect fashion with his character development in The Lyre of Orpheus. In this respect, one can also examine Giles Revelstoke's life and discern parallels with Hoffman as well. Taylor claims that the "...unhappy conditions of his [Hoffman's] childhood had driven him in upon himself, forcing him to live on the fruits of his own inborn talents and interests" (Taylor 10). Giles' escape to London appears to have been precipitated by the fact that he was receiving no motherly support for his music. Mrs. Hopkin-Griffiths informs Monica that

> ...music as a profession--well, nobody we know has ever done it, and one hears about the risks, and everything... But Gilly could have such a different life, if he chose, and one does so want one's son to make the right choice. (MF 186)

Giles is also similar to Hoffman in the fact that

> Up to his [Hoffman's] thirty-third year his chief artistic productions were his compositions, and although his activity as a composer diminished sharply after the discovery of his literary talents, he continued to write occasional compositions.... (Schafer 173)

Giles, thirty-three at the time of his first meeting with Monica, is, aside from being a composer, immersed in the writing of the critical magazine, Lantern. Therefore, while Hoffman may be Schnak's mythical muse, used to complete her

as an artist, Schnak also completes the myth, since she releases Hoffman from his sentence in limbo. Davies has also clearly adopted aspects of Hoffman's life in creating the geniuses that appear in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus.

The inclusion of the myth of King Arthur in The Lyre of Orpheus, is abundantly more obvious than parallels with the stories of Orpheus or Hoffman. Janice Kulyk Keefer writes, "...Davies seems to think that Maria's adultery and Arthur's infertility will strike the reader as enormous and persuasive surprises rather than wrenchings of the narrative to fit the overly schematic plot he's designed" (Keefer 11). In case the reader cannot comprehend the details concerning the myth of King Arthur the numerous times it is told throughout the novel, Davies creates his characters so the reader does not need to stretch his imaginative capabilities in attempting to envision the myth. All the important players are present: Arthur, as the magnanimous cuckold himself, King Arthur; Maria, as the adulterous wife, Guenevere; Geraint, as the back-stabbing best friend, Lancelot; Schnak, as the woman foolishly in love with Lancelot, Elaine; Wally Crottel, claiming to be Parlabane's illegitimate son, as the evil Mordred; and Darcourt, as the meddling Merlin. The members of the Cornish Foundation become the Knights of the Round Table and Arthur bravely attempts to come to terms with the betrayal of the two individuals closest to him. Whitaker notes:

> Arthur Cornish, rendered infertile by an attack of the mumps, must endure the role of cuckold. Yet he sustains the attribute of magnificence...not only by presiding over the Round Table and footing the bills but also by practising patience, forgiveness, and love.... (Whitaker 166)

The conception and eventual birth of Maria's son is not even original, since Whitaker points out, "In a manner suggesting both King Uther's begetting of Arthur and Lancelot's begetting of the Grail hero, she [Maria] is seduced and impregnated by a man "disguised" as her husband" (Whitaker 166). While Davies may be clever in displaying his ample capabilities for creating a relatively modern version of King Arthur's myth, his narrative becomes all but blatant with the inclusion of the myth in the novel. The characters are not only engulfed in the myth personally, they are involved in its stage production as well. Any individuality Davies may have attempted to impart upon these characters was abandoned when he molded them to fit a myth centuries old.

In an elaboration and expansion of qualities inherent in A Mixture of Frailties, The Lyre of Orpheus is completely saturated with myth. It may be stated that Davies moves from the spiritual to the mythological, since Ma Gall, Mrs. Bridgetower, and eventually Giles, become guiding spirits for a number of characters. Hoy believes that in A Mixture of Frailties,

> The world of imagination, fantasy, and illusion is scrutinized against the common-sense standards and incontroversible demands of everyday reality, while the limitations of a world of facts and reason are exposed within the context of a larger, spiritual world. (Hoy 70)

Davies uses the spirits of his deceased characters to guide and mold the existences of those left behind. Monica experiences freedom following her mother's death, while Mrs. Bridgetower attempts to take Solly's freedom away following her demise. In the same manner, mythology imposes itself upon the lives of the characters in The Lyre of Orpheus, guiding them into an assumption of more archetypal roles. Through Schnak's Ph.D. dissertation choice, she assumes the role of Orpheus and inadvertently changes the lives of everyone associated with the opera. Arthur, Maria and Geraint become more aware of their significance and its effect on each other's lives and proceed to unrealistic lengths to make the situation run smoothly and ensure that Arthur appears as he should.

Following in this vein, it may be suggested that the operas created in both novels assume mythical or spiritual significance by overwhelming the lives of both Giles and Arthur. As has already been stated, Arthur becomes the magnanimous cuckold. Coinciding with this, Giles is created as a physical representation of his opera, The Golden Asse. The opera is described as following the story of

> ...Lucius, whose meddling in magic caused him to be transformed into an ass, from which unhappy metamorphosis he was delivered only after he had achieved new wisdom. But the character of the music emphasized the tale as allegory...disclosing the metamorphosis of life itself, in which man moves from confident inexperience through the bitterness of experience, toward the rueful wisdom of self knowledge. (MF 316)

Giles, through his experiences as composer and conductor,

realizes what a fiasco he has made of his career and personal life, and uses the knowledge he has gained to rid the world of his pitiful presence.

The inclusion of individuals who utilize varying media for their artistic expression in both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus suggests a final brief examination of Davies' narrative practice. Both works are used to explore a variety of artistic endeavours. In A Mixture of Frailties, Davies' focus centres upon the world of music, with in depth portrayals of the processes involved with singing, composing and conducting. Through the inclusion of the Lantern, a periodical, Davies also provides his readers with a glimpse of the intricacies involved in producing a substantial written work, one largely devoted to artistic criticism. Davies expands his range in The Lyre of Orpheus to include an analysis of the rigours involved with painting, as well as more detailed examples of the writing process, exemplified in Darcourt's work on both a novel and a libretto. Each of the characters Davies creates in A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus is influenced positively by art in some form. However, the aesthetic influences and processes Davies creates change dramatically in the period elapsing between the publication of these novels.

In both novels, artists are revered by those with artistic inclinations, and degraded by those who choose to remain ignorant about the illumination art provides for the world. However, the reader discerns a noticeable change between the

fictions. The criticism included in A Mixture of Frailties largely stems from the Lantern, a representative of critical magazines circulating during the 1950s. Monica describes the publication as seeming to "...presuppose a special body of knowledge in the reader, and to allude to this private preserve of indignation and disgust in a way which shut out the uninitiated ...It was devoted in a large part to criticism of critics..." (MF 159). The criticism in The Lyre of Orpheus is represented by the professors assigned to examine Schnak's doctoral dissertation. What was illustrated as a more broad social movement in A Mixture of Frailties, becomes abundantly more formal and restricted in The Lyre of Orpheus. The type of criticism portrayed through Davies' use of the Lantern is made to suit a public forum. Through this fictitious publication, Davies indicates that art and its criticism has more informal social appeal, that art affects every individual's life, no matter how common his existence. In The Lyre of Orpheus, the criticism moves to an academic forum. Art loses its mass appeal and its appreciation becomes restricted to either those with money or those individuals who have been formally educated within a university.

This sentiment may be extended to provide an examination of cultural discrepancies in art and criticism. The situation depicted in A Mixture of Frailties may be seen as the environment inherent to Europe. Art, in a European sense, is viewed as a more socially acceptable pursuit. The scenario Davies creates in The Lyre of Orpheus is more indicative of

Canadian views toward art. The view becomes extremely narrow and the pursuit of a career in any art medium is largely considered frivolous.

The types of individuals both Monica and Schnak interact with in their respective novels are also remarkably similar. Davies designs the story so that both individuals are continuously surrounded by artists, be they composers, conductors, singers or writers. In both A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, Davies creates small artistic groups where eligibility is restricted to a select few. The individuals that make up the group found in A Mixture of Frailties are all employed in some capacity with the Lantern. Their general purpose is to criticize artists outside their special circle. The group created in The Lyre of Orpheus is comprised of the members of the Cornish Foundation. They are similar to the Bridgetower Trust in respect to the fact that they financially support a young, female student of music. However, the Trusts differ from each other in the fact that most members of the Cornish Trust have some artistic capabilities as well, thereby allowing them to contribute to the production of Arthur of Britain, or the Magnanimous Cuckold. The intimate artistic groups Davies includes in both novels provide him with a possible forum from which he may offer readers his own artistic views, and to supply encouraging and knowledgeable guides for both Monica and Schnak.

While the artistic focus in A Mixture of Frailties is on originality, depicted by the fact that Giles is creating his

own opera and Monica is learning her art as a profession, it changes in The Lyre of Orpheus. Davies forsakes the encouragement of original work to examine the artistic inclination to work in an outdated style. Schnak is engaged in completing an opera begun during the Romantic period, while Darcourt uncovers the fact that Francis Cornish painted too convincingly in an Old Master style. Darcourt is also involved in the creation of a libretto, relying almost solely on a poet from the Romantic period as his guidepost. Both Schnak and Francis forsake working in a style congruent to popular modes of their respective eras, and look to historically proven modes to provide them with artistic satisfaction. An intriguing note must be made concerning the fact that what Francis did in his original painting, "The Marriage at Cana," is considered faking; what Schnak does to complete Hoffman's opera is considered worthy of a doctoral degree. While the work of all three artists may certainly be defined as 'original,' the direct influences they have received from artists of bygone eras cannot be overlooked. Through the dramatic change that Davies' fiction epitomizes between A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, he may be attempting to illustrate some dissatisfaction with the modernization of all aspects of art.

Davies modifies his narrative approach in The Lyre of Orpheus to include infrequent narrative interludes from Hoffman. The composer trapped in limbo provides 'authentic' historical background to complement information delivered by

those employed in the production of the opera. Whitaker writes:

> One authorial voice belongs to Hoffman (ETAH) who from limbo provides autobiographical details, information about early nineteenth-century theatres, disquisitions on Romantic art, and sardonic assessments of the Torontonians. (Whitaker 167)

The difficulty with Hoffman's narration is the lack of depth he provides for all the topics Whitaker lists. While he does make sweeping generalizations and does provide 'authentic' period information, he does relatively little in informing the reader. Hoffman's most significant contribution to the novel is the differences he illustrates between the difficulties associated with composing and conducting during his era, as opposed to the relative ease with which the artists he was observing produce.

The narrative in A Mixture of Frailties allows for a better understanding of characters and their development. While Davies includes a larger number of subsidiary characters in A Mixture of Frailties, he still provides for more than sufficient narration concerning Monica's growth. Monica's internal growth stimulates discussion concerning her changes as an individual. Monica's development also provides Davies with a podium from which to lecture, usually through the wise mentor, Sir Benedict Domdaniel. In a speech meant to encourage Monica's singing progression, Sir Benedict lectures:

> And you may take it from me that you'll get all the experience you want, soon enough. Most people reach a point where they're wishing experience would stop crowding them. Anyhow, it isn't what happens to you that really counts: it's what you are able to do with

> it. The streets are crammed with people who have had the most extraordinary experiences--been shipwrecked, chased out of Caliph's harems, blown sky-high by bombs --and it hasn't meant a thing to them, because they couldn't distill it. Art's distillation; experience is wine, and art is the brandy we distill from it. (MF 137)

Davies' sermons are what may often be identified as continuously masked behind the persona of a wise character in the novel.

Davies alters the narrative focus in The Lyre of Orpheus to create more substantial and influential sub-plots. Not only does the reader follow Schnak's progress on the opera, but the Cornish's marital difficulties and Darcourt's criminal accomplishments while searching for the key to his novel as well. While there are fewer subsidiary characters who are introduced only for brief scenes, Davies focuses on a larger proportion of characters who are pertinent to the plot's development. Davies also tends to rely more heavily upon dialogue, and monologue, in The Lyre of Orpheus. There is more involvement between characters, instead of time set aside for narrative reflection to update the readers, and Davies has an increased propensity to lecture, at great length. Geraint is continuously discussing the plight of the modern day artist, while Darcourt provides readers with lengthy discussions concerning religion, art and the criminal mind. The increased tendency Davies displays for lecturing may simply be due to the fact that he has created more characters in The Lyre of Orpheus with the intellectual capabilities of carrying on an extended, meaningful conversation. Keith

maintains that Davies, in the Cornish trilogy, has developed a habit similar to that of the Romantic novelist Thomas Love Peacock, by

> ...assembling a collection of articulate eccentrics in one place...and having them discuss and argue about topics that engage the writer. This emphasis is less on plot...as on the probing of the mysterious processes of personal inclination and the dictates of Fate.... (Keith, Review 143)

Davies has relatively no concerns about plot development in The Lyre of Orpheus, since he is simply revising both the myth of King Arthur and, to a large extent, the essential elements of a novel he published thirty years earlier.

The dramatic parallels that have been illustrated throughout this study between A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus, are part of Robertson Davies' larger thematic concerns in his trilogies. Few critics have devoted their examinations of these two analogous works to more than a brief summary of the remarkable similarities between them. The analysis undertaken in this study has revealed the possibility that in his consistently duplicating characters, situations, and even narrative techniques, Davies is exhibiting the refinement his writing abilities have undergone over a thirty year period. While this study has been restricted to the similarities between these two novels, the parallels can easily be carried over into virtually all of Davies' works. The distinct correlations found between A Mixture of Frailties and The Lyre of Orpheus argues more than sheer coincidence in Davies' reworking of an already published work. These two

novels have apparently been produced to demonstrate part of Davies' deep conviction concerning artists and their continual development. Through his modernization of elements contained in a novel of his own written thirty years earlier, Robertson Davies creates The Lyre of Orpheus and is providing readers with a display of any changes that have taken place in both his social views spanning a variety of topics and a strengthening of his beliefs of the merits associated with the devoting of one's life to artistic pursuits.

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